

AYLESBURY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR  
FOR THE YEAR 1973

To the Chairman and Members of the  
AYLESBURY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL



Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is usual to submit this report with that of your Medical Officer of Health but as certain statistics are not yet available for the completion of his report I trust that you will receive my review for 1973 separately so that it may be recorded during the life of the Council.



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PREVIEW

- 1.1 In reviewing the work of the Public Health and Surveyor's Department for 1973 regard has to be given to the background of change and its subsequent pressures during the year.
- 1.2 Mr. Cant has retired and no one can deny the loss of his experience and personality. I have been privileged to act as your Chief Officer for the period from his retirement until local government reorganization but because of this reorganization no appointment has been made to maintain the establishment. Neither has it been possible to replace the Technical Assistant who left in 1972.
- 1.3 Local government reorganization has brought an increased work load in 1973 which has had to be met with a reduced staff. Consequently to do all those things which have to be done - however trivial - some of the things that ought to have been done, or we would like to have seen done, have had to be held in abeyance.
- 1.4 If this is obvious in the report which follows I would ask for your understanding and I would assure you that every effort has been made to maintain the high standard of service which has been the aim of the department for so long.

PRIVATE HOUSING

- 2.1 The annual report for 1972 contained a detailed appraisal of the housing situation in the district and I do not feel that I can add any further useful comment to it.
- 2.2 The significant statistics for 1973 are:
- |   |     |     |     |            |
|---|-----|-----|-----|------------|
| Demolition Orders made                            | ... | ... | ... | 1          |
| Closing Orders made                               | ... | ... | ... | 5          |
| Houses in Clearance Areas demolished              | ... |     |     | 6          |
| Individual unfit houses demolished                | ... |     |     | 21         |
| Individual unfit houses reconditioned             | ... |     |     | 14         |
| Houses repaired as a result of<br>informal action | ... | ... | ... | 135        |
| <u>Qualification Certificates</u>                 |     |     |     |            |
| Applications received (Sec. 28(1))                | ... |     |     | 16         |
| Certificates issued (Sec. 28(1))                  | ... |     |     | 7          |
| Applications received (Sec. 29(1))                | ... |     |     | 15         |
| Certificates issued (Sec. 29(1))                  | ... |     |     | 3          |
| <u>Improvement Grants</u>                         |     |     |     |            |
| Applications approved                             | ... | ... | ... | 125        |
| Applications refused                              | ... | ... | ... | 12         |
| <u>Standard Grants</u>                            |     |     |     |            |
| Applications received and approved                | ... |     |     | 8          |
| <u>Value of Grants paid in 1973</u>               |     |     |     |            |
| Improvement grants                                | ... | ... | ... | £81,669.00 |
| Standard grants                                   | ... | ... | ... | 1,560.00   |
| Total value                                       | ... | ... | ... | £83,229.00 |

- 2.3 By 31st December, 1973, the total number of grant applications determined by this Council since the scheme started in 1949 is:

Improvement grants	...	1261
Standard grants	...	479

3 PUBLIC CLEANSING

Refuse Collection

- 3.1 In this, the final year of this Council's life, it is timely to recall that in 1966 you embarked, under Mr. Cant's guidance, in a complete change of system to disposable polythene sacks with sack holders supplied by the Council. At the same time you instituted a bonus incentive scheme for your manual workers which was based on work study. It may be appropriate to review performance.
- 3.2 The reorganized service became operational early in 1967 and anticipated and fully met the recommendations of the Government Working Party which reported on the subject later in 1967. I have no doubt that the Council can be proud of its decision which has been fully vindicated.
- 3.3 During the period of operation continuous up-dating has been maintained and it has been possible to forward plan for the growth of the district and for the increasing quantity and bulk/weight ratio of refuse so that the service could be maintained efficiently. However, in 1973 it became clear that the basic time values and work load evaluation should be re-studied in the field to maintain a sound basis of planning. It was hoped that with local government reorganization approaching this could be carried out as a joint exercise for all the districts to be merged so that the new authority would have a uniform standard already established. Unfortunately this was not to be.
- 3.4 Vehicle replacements have been made with full regard to their suitability for sacked refuse and their greater efficiency and capacity has offset much of the effect of increased work load. No additional vehicle for the collection of household refuse has been required in the period since 1966.
- 3.5 During 1973 the labour position has been difficult and, at times, critical. Fortunately the availability of drivers for heavy goods vehicles eased towards the end of the year but the utmost difficulty has been experienced in obtaining loaders and the service has been under strength for most of the period.
- 3.6 It is disturbing how often applicants for work have been offered and have accepted employment and have then failed to report for work.

- 3.7 Despite labour shortage and increased public holidays, I am pleased to report that collections were maintained on a weekly schedule even over holiday periods. Appreciation is due for the loyalty of many of the workmen and for the fact that financial reward for extra effort by under-strength crews provides a realistic incentive within the bonus scheme.
- 3.8 Most sack holder units have been in use for over seven years. Loss and damage have been negligible and no replacement for wear and/or corrosion has been necessary. In my opinion these units still have many years of useful service. You may be well satisfied that your decision to initially provide free-standing units rather than to compromise with bin-liners was a correct one with the objective of eliminating the retention of a soiled container and providing the quickest method of service. In view of their long service, the cost of fully guarded units might have been justified to eliminate the occasional damage of sacks by animals.
- 3.9 Since 1966 there has been a steady drop in the price of polythene refuse sacks and by 1972 they had fallen in price by some £3 per thousand. This year it was apparent that the pattern was about to change and in accepting tenders for 1973/4 you were well advised to accept not the lowest but a fixed priced contract at £10.59 per thousand.
- 3.10 Although no additional supplies have been available at this price, the basic requirement of 800,000 is being honoured within the contract whereas prices have been rising rapidly to those authorities who had no such protection. It was necessary towards the end of the year to pay £28.50 per thousand for a small supply of sacks to ensure stocks during the uncertain period of power restrictions and at the time of reorganization.

#### Cleansing Vehicles

- 3.11 During the year all the heavy goods vehicles of the service were plated and tested for the first time. Two of the older cesspool tankers required a modification of the braking systems but all vehicles were passed without any serious use restriction. Co-operation with the Borough of Aylesbury enabled our vehicle servicing to be carried out at their workshops and this was a logical step towards reorganization.

### Civic Amenities Act

- 3.12 The Council continues to offer free collection of large items of household waste and requests are in the order of 1,400 per annum. At times there has been delay in making such collections when all available labour has been needed to maintain our scheduled refuse rounds, but by the end of the year the position was satisfactory.
- 3.13 Requests vary from the reasonable to the extreme. Sometimes the removal of whole buildings is demanded at public expense and there is a growing tendency for jobbing builders to expect the Council to take away the residual rubble and waste material from site.
- 3.14 Despite the availability of a disposal site and a collection service, unauthorised dumping continues.

### Refuse Disposal

- 3.15 At the start of the year it was anticipated that a contract with Kesgrave Disposals Ltd. would soon come into operation. All refuse would then be discharged on their site at Rabans Close, Aylesbury.
- 3.16 In July delivery to their plant was commenced but it failed to meet demand and it was necessary to revert to bulk haulage from Hartwell to Calvert. By the end of the year the plant at Rabans Close was still not in operation and the contract was cancelled.
- 3.17 The use of Hartwell site for transfer of refuse was originally intended as a temporary measure pending operation of the disposal contract but with local government reorganization now so close it will no doubt continue to meet demands for the interim period.
- 3.18 Thanks must be extended to Aylesbury Borough Council and its Officers for co-operation in making the Calvert tip available and for undertaking the disposal of our refuse there at a charge pro-rata to total tonnage.

### DEPOSIT OF POISONOUS WASTE ACT 1972

- 4.1 The privately owned tip at Woodham is the only place in the district receiving poisonous waste under notice.
- 4.2 During the year the licence issued under the Bucks County Council Act controlling this tip was re-issued in an amended form to accept full use of the site within the control of the Deposit of Poisonous Waste Act.
- 4.3 426 notifications have been received in 1973 for the deposit at Woodham of the following quantities:-

Solid waste	-	approximately 600 cu. metres and
Solid waste	-	2,072 tons
Liquid waste	-	1,085,767 gallons

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## SEWERAGE

- 5.1 Your Engineer has achieved excellent progress in the sewering of the area and during 1973 -
- a) schemes for Chearsley, Bishopstone, Dinton, Upton, Upper Hartwell and Broughton were completed
  - b) schemes for Ford and Ludgershall were nearing completion
  - c) schemes for Ashendon and Dorton were commenced.
- 5.2 Great improvements in the sanitary condition of those areas will certainly follow the provision of main drainage.
- 5.3 The work of giving advice and supervision on the alteration or provision of house drainage and its connection to the sewer has fallen on the Inspectors of this department and has at times been very demanding of their services.

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## FOOD PREMISES AND INSPECTION

- 6.1 A prosecution has been taken for the sale of unsound sausages. The retailer pleaded warranty and the case against him was dismissed but a fine of £30 was imposed on the manufacturer.
- 6.2 A prosecution of the occupier of a food premises for contravention of the Food Hygiene Regulations is awaiting a hearing before the Magistrates Court.
- 6.3 There is only one slaughterhouse in the district and this has a very small throughput, killing is normally confined to one half-day per week. The proposed new private slaughterhouse at Long Crendon has not yet been completed.

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## NUISANCES AND DRAINAGE

- 7.1 Investigation of all complaints were made and most were resolved by informal action.
- Three matters resulted in formal action, namely -
- a) A caravan in an insanitary condition was removed by authority of an Abatement Order.
  - b) A summons for creating a smoke nuisance was taken out but could not be served as the occupier of the site vacated the premises and left the district for an address not known.
  - c) A Court Order was made to require an owner of premises to provide satisfactory drainage.

- 7.2 There has been an increasing volume of complaint about fouling of public places by dogs.  
The Byelaws to control fouling of footways are of limited application and the time may be approaching when public opinion demands action to protect open spaces used by them and their children from such fouling.

8 PEST DESTRUCTION

- 8.1 During the year, 1935 visits were made to properties and 337 cases of rat infestation and 3 of mice infestation were treated.

9 PETROLEUM ACTS

- 9.1 A total of 84 licences were in operation at the end of the year.  
9.2 One incident arose where a householder obtained a bulk supply of petroleum from a garage for storage at home without licence. Subsequent prosecution resulted in the imposition of a fine on the garage proprietor for contravention of conditions of licence and a fine, together with confiscation of petroleum and tank, on the householder for unlicensed storage.

10 CORROSIVE SUBSTANCES (CONVEYANCE BY ROAD) REGULATIONS 1971

- 10.1 Following spillage on the highway from a tanker conveying liquid to which these regulations apply a fine of £50 was imposed by the Court upon the owners of the tanker for offences against the regulations.

11 OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

11.1 The following is a statistical summary of work under this Act during the year:-

REGISTRATIONS AND GENERAL INSPECTIONS

Class of Premises	No. of premises registered during the year	No. of Registered premises at the end of the year	No. of registered premises receiving a general inspection during the year
Offices	1	37	7
Retail shops	3	106	27
Wholesale shops, Warehouses	1	5	4
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens	-	21	8
Fuel storage depots	-	-	-
<u>Total:</u>	5	169	46
Total number of visits of all kinds by inspectors to Registered premises under the Act	...	...	<u>63</u>

12 BUILDING CONTROL

- 12.1 The increased public participation in planning matters has continued and there is inevitable conflict between the demand for housing and an equally strong demand to preserve the character of villages and restrict their spread.
- 12.2 In some parishes development has had to be curtailed because the sewage disposal plants are already loaded to the limit. There is greater awareness and co-operation between the planning, river and local authorities in facing this problem but the availability of capital to rebuild or extend treatment plant can be the ~~the~~ rusty hinge that keeps the door closed.

### 12.3 New buildings

The number of plans submitted during the year totalled 1,235. These are summarised as follows:-

#### Building Regulations - Town and Country Planning Acts

##### Dwelling Houses

New	...	...	...	...	...	76 for 143 houses
Layout plans		...	...	...	...	24 for 157 houses
Outline applications		...	...	...	...	239
Conversions	...	...	...	...	...	51
Alterations and additions		...	...	...	...	395
Change of use		...	...	...	...	17

##### Industrial

New	...	...	...	...	...	10
Alterations and additions to Factories and Workshops		...	...	...	...	14
Outline applications		...	...	...	...	21
Change of use		...	...	...	...	7

##### Miscellaneous

Agricultural buildings	...	...	...	...	...	72
Private garages	...	...	...	...	...	171
Caravans	...	...	...	...	...	13
Others	...	...	...	...	...	83
Applications cancelled		...	...	...	...	42

##### Number of dwellings completed

Private	...	...	...	...	...	47
Local Authority	...	...	...	...	...	70
						<u>117</u>

### 13 STAFF

- 13.1 I have already referred to the retirement of Mr. R.A. Cant in the preview to this report. He had served the Council since 1929 and had been a Chief Officer for nearly 20 years. It would have been fitting if this, the final report to this Council, could have been under his hand.
- 13.2 Miss P. Kabaltshuk and Mr. R. Harrison joined the department directly from school during the year, the former as a clerk and the latter as a junior in building control duties.
- 13.3 Day release courses have been available to all staff desirous of advancing their knowledge and skills and five of them have taken advantage of the facility. Mr. J.E. Sale passed the O.N.C. examination in Public Administration.

CONCLUSION

- 14.1 I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to all the staff of the department for their effort and support in a period of heavy pressure of work and equally heavy personal pressure with the pattern of their future employment undecided for much of the year.
- 14.2 On behalf of myself and the staff I would also record our thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Council, to the Chief Executive and Clerk, to the Medical Officer of Health and to colleagues in all departments for the happy and personal association we have enjoyed.

D. C. MULLEY, M.A.P.H.I.

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Acting Chief Public Health Inspector  
and Surveyor.

March, 1974

84, Walton Street,  
Aylesbury.

